

REMARKS

Upon entry of the instant amendment, claims 21, 23-27, 29 and 32-35 will be pending in this application. Claims 21, 23, 25, 26, 29 and 33-35 are amended herein. Claims 22 and 30 are cancelled herein.

Re: Claims 21-24, 26, 29, 30, 32 and 34

Claims 21-24, 26, 29, 30, 32 and 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,801,747 issued to Bedard (hereinafter, "Bedard '747"). The rejection of claims 22 and 29 is deemed moot in view of their cancellation herein. Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 32 and 34 in view of the accompanying amendments. In particular, amended independent claims 21 and 29 define a method for storing and selecting a single channel of interest comprising steps of:

“determining if an uninterrupted reception duration of a currently received channel has exceeded a time interval, ***said determining step being performed only until said uninterrupted reception duration exceeds said time interval;***

memorizing said currently received channel as said single channel of interest in response to determining that said uninterrupted reception duration of said currently received channel exceeds said time interval;

identifying switching between said different channels; and
changing over to said single channel of interest upon activation of a dedicated command.” (see claim 21 – emphasis added), and

“setting a time interval;
determining if an uninterrupted reception duration of a currently received channel has exceeded said time interval, ***said determining step being performed only until said uninterrupted reception duration exceeds said time interval;***

memorizing said currently received channel as said single channel of interest in response to determining that said uninterrupted reception duration of said currently received channel exceeds said time interval;

identifying switching between said different program channels; and

changing over directly to said single channel of interest upon activation of a dedicated command.” (see claim 29 – emphasis added)

As indicated above, independent claims 21 and 29 each define a method for storing and selecting a single channel of interest which can be switched over between different channels. The method includes a step of determining if an uninterrupted reception duration of a currently received channel has exceeded a time interval. This determining step is performed ***only until the uninterrupted reception duration exceeds the time interval***. The currently received channel is stored as the single channel of interest in response to determining that the uninterrupted reception duration of the currently received channel exceeds the time interval. The method further includes steps of identifying switching between different channels, and changing over to the single channel of interest upon activation of a dedicated command.

Bedard '747 fails to teach or suggest the invention defined by independent claims 21 or 29. Bedard '747 discloses a method for monitoring a viewer's activities, determining not only the viewer's favorite channels, but also the viewer's preferred categories of programming, and configuring the display of an EPG or other suitable guide system according to the viewer's viewing preferences. See column 2, lines 6-12. When monitoring a viewer's activities,

Bedard '747 considers short durations of viewing any one particular channel to be insignificant, and only considers significant those viewing periods longer than one viewing unit (the alleged "time interval" in claims 21 and 29). See column 3, line 63 to column 4, line 14. However, even after a particular channel is viewed for longer than one viewing unit, Bedard '747 still continues to monitor the viewing duration of that particular channel and may accumulate multiple viewing units for multiple channels. See column 4, lines 27-37 and FIG. 2.

In contrast to Bedard '747, the methods of independent claims 21 and 29 monitor the uninterrupted reception of a channel ***only until the uninterrupted reception duration exceeds the time interval***. In other words, Bedard '747 continually monitors the viewing durations of multiple channels for purposes of providing an EPG or other suitable guide system based on viewer preferences. Conversely, the claimed invention detects the uninterrupted reception of a channel only until the uninterrupted reception duration exceeds the time interval (thereafter freeing the microprocessor from the task of monitoring the viewing duration) for purposes of establishing a channel as a single channel of interest that may be conveniently recalled by a dedicated command. In this manner, the claimed invention and Bedard '747 address fundamentally different problems. Accordingly, independent claims 21 and 29 and their respective dependent claims are deemed allowable over Bedard '747, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Re: Claims 25, 27, 33 and 35

Claims 25, 27, 33 and 35 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bedard '747 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,115,080 issued to Reitmeier (hereinafter, "Reitmeier '080"). Applicant traverses this rejection for at least the same reasons stated above with reference to independent claims 21 and 29 since Reitmeier '080 is unable to remedy the deficiencies of Bedard '747.

Reitmeier '080 discloses a method of selecting for further processing a desired television channel suitable for use in a television receiver capable of receiving both analog and digital television signals, so that channel selection is effected in a relatively rapid manner. See column 2, lines 9-19. The television receiver may store a counter associated with each of the channels available to a particular viewer. See column 7, line 64 to column 8, line 2. Upon power up, the receiver examines the counter list, identifies the four highest count values, and stores information relating to these four channels in the favorite list of the scan list. See column 8, lines 2-5. However, like Bedard '747, Reitmeier '080 does not disclose or suggest, *inter alia*, the feature of detecting the uninterrupted reception of a channel ***only until the uninterrupted reception duration exceeds the time interval*** for purposes of establishing a channel as a single channel of interest that may be conveniently recalled by a dedicated command, as claimed. Accordingly, claims 25, 27, 33 and 35 are deemed allowable over the proposed combination of Bedard '747 and Reitmeier '080, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Having fully addressed the Examiner's rejections it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at (609) 734-6813, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

No fee is believed due. However, if a fee is due, please charge the fee to Deposit Account 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,



By: Reitseng Lin
Reg. No. 42,804
Phone (609) 734-6813

Patent Operations
Thomson Licensing Inc.
P.O. Box 5312
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
September 28, 2004

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to [Mail Stop Amendment], Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on:

9-28-05
Date

Karen Schlauch
Karen Schlauch